



ODDYSEY The Billiad

*"No matter where you go.....
There you are"*

OVERVIEW

Odyssey - The Billiad is a book of one man's personal journey around the world in two weeks - accomplished without leaving the State of Ohio. It is also a glimpse into human ambitions and aspirations tempered by the realities of today's world. With humor and style the photographer visits towns from Moscow to Mesopotamia, Congo to Calcutta, Aberdeen to York by way of Utopia and scores of other unlikely places all found in America's heartland. As foreign as the place names are, the towns are distinctly American yet the photographs connect mid America with the larger world. The book speaks to everyone's pride of place.

In **Odyssey** the images are presented as snapshots taken by a tourist making a world tour. The pictures appear as though mounted in stick-on photo corners just like a tourist's photo album. Handwritten below each picture is the date and in some cases a phonetic spelling of the town's name. Often the towns' names are spelled as expected but pronounced with a uniquely American sound

The exotic foreign names become strangely appropriate American versions of distant lands that are connected despite the distance. Paris is transformed from the historic 16th century European city to a rural farm town with a traditional red farmhouse. Moscow is not Red Square and the Kremlin walls but rather a roadside chain link fence and grassy field. In Arabia Ohio we find a gas station instead of oil wells. Waterloo is not a battlefield but rather a town of gravestones. Today these towns with foreign names form a microcosm of modern life in America and the world.

Odyssey takes the viewer out their everyday quotidian existence that obscures the importance of every person in every place around the world.

"The stories that we tell... about [Ohio]... are stories that could be told about almost any settlement in the Northwest Territory. They are stories of hardships overcome by courage and resourcefulness – of grief, deprivation, hard work, and suffering, but somehow, even more, about the indomitable spirit, the willingness to move ahead, the reason for living that our ancestors had, and that we all seek." from *Stories That We Tell Our Children About Iberia [Ohio]*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In 1985 Bill Westheimer found himself adrift: changing jobs and moving to New York from Colorado. He took on a personal project of documenting life in the center of America, specifically in Ohio where he was born and raised. While traveling around the state he



stopped in 60 towns to photograph himself with a sign identifying the unfamiliar spot with a familiar name.

Bill Westheimer's photography has been used for scores of book covers with a wide range of publishers, dozens of corporate annual reports and countless editorial projects over the past 25 years. His extensive experience as a commercial photographer proves him professional, reliable, dependable, thrifty, clean and irreverent.

He recently completed MANUAL: The Personalities of Hands, a book and exhibition of personal portraits told through photographs of hands. His Camera Obscura views of New York created with Charles Schwartz were recently exhibited at the Alan Klotz Gallery in New York's Chelsea gallery district and The Carl Solway Gallery in Cincinnati. Westheimer's work is in numerous collections including Atlantic Richfield Corp., JP Morgan Chase, Cincinnati Art Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art –San Diego, Goldman Sachs, Laguna Beach Museum and Pacific Bell.

He earned a B.A. in philosophy from Union College with additional study in photographic and graphic art. He has studied with renowned photographers Jerry Burchfield and Mark Osterman.

BOOK FORMAT

- The book size is 7.5" high x 7.5" wide, softbound.
- The pages are laid out in chronological order with a brief explanatory note in the beginning and an afterword which describes the process which created the images and book.
- 64 pages
- full color reproduction of the artwork.
- book design can be adapted to suit the publisher's requirements.

COMPETITION

Passing Gas and Other stories along the American Highway by Gary Gladstone was published by Ten Speed Press in 2003 and quickly sold out requiring repeated printings. Gladstone's sequel Reaching Climax: And Other Towns Along the American Highway was published in 2006 and sold out before the books became available.

Travels with Charley in Search of America by John Steinbeck

Route 66 - Lost and Found: Ruins and Relics Revisited by Russell Olsen

The Lincoln Highway: Main Street across America by Drake Hokanson

The American Highway: The History and Culture of Roads in the United States by William Kaszynski

The Americans by Robert Frank

Odyssey: The Billiard is similar in humor to the Garrison Keillor stories about Minnesota

MARKETING

Target Audiences:

- Lovers of Americana
- Ohioans (population 11,353,140 in 2000)
- Armchair travelers



- Teachers – looking for new ways to encourage their students to learn about geography
- American history lovers will gain a feel for the settling of Ohio in the 19th century.
- Psychiatrists and psychologists – intrigued by and appreciative of the links between occupation, hand and statement.
- General Interest – those who enjoy books that offer insights into humanity through photographs that serve as a jumping off point for the imaginative.

Outreach Initiatives:

- Gallery exhibitions linked to publication.
- On **The ODDYSSEY** web site, viewers will be able to post their photos of towns with foreign names, creating a social networking web site which would show travel advertising.
- Online e-cards website
- Westheimer will collaborate with a publicist to select media targets in conjunction with publisher; will develop release, determine and undertake pitches.

Constituency:

Ohioans and citizens who are proud of their towns find *Odyssey* a ratification of their pride of place. People who have immigrated to America from a foreign land and their descendants will enjoy seeing how others have brought their homelands with them to Ohio.

COLLATERAL OPPORTUNITIES:

Additional products provide brand extension for **ODDYSSEY**, reinforcing the concept and expanding the concept to other audiences:

- Calendars
- Mini version for impulse purchase
- Postcards and postcard book
- Social networking website – see <http://odyssey.ning.com>

COMPLETION TIME:

All photography has been completed. The images have been digitized and are high resolution. Timing would be a factor of the publisher's schedule. The design is complete and can be adapted to the publisher's requirements.

MORE INFORMATION:

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